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INTERIOR SECRETARY HODEL COMMENDS TWO COMPANIES FOR AQUATIC EDUCATION EFFORTS

Secretary of the Interior Don Hodel today praised two fishing tackle companies for helping teach young people about aquatic resources.

Berkley, Inc. of Iowa and Oklahoma-based Zebco are contributing fishing tackle worth \$1.8 million to the Sport Fishing Institute Fund in Washington, DC. This non-profit organization will, in turn, distribute the equipment to States sponsoring aquatic education programs for use in schools and for other educational activities.

"I have urged Americans to take pride in our nation's magnificent natural resources. Education is a key to this," Hodel said. "The donations from Berkley and Zebco embody the Take Pride message. Through their generosity, many of our young citizens will become acquainted with aquatic environments and will learn how to care for these resources wisely."

Funds for State aquatic education programs are authorized by the Wallop-Breaux amendments to the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration program, commonly known as the "Dingell-Johnson" program. Derived from Federal excise tax receipts on fishing equipment, the States received approximately \$140 million in 1987 for sport fish-related projects. Up to 10 percent of these funds can be used for aquatic education programs. The Berkley and Zebco tackle donations are intended to encourage States to develop aquatic education curricula for their school systems.

Secretary Hodel also commended the Future Fisherman Foundation, established by Berkley, for its efforts to promote aquatic resource education and for its campaign urging young people to "get hooked on fishing, not drugs."

"Fishing and other outdoor recreation can offer wholesome outlets for youthful energies," Hodel said. "I applaud the Future Fisherman Foundation for adopting this anti-drug theme in its outreach to young people."